

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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Visit of the First Deputy Minister for Transport of the USSR to East Germany 25X1

1. The First Deputy Minister of the Soviet Ministry of Transportation, V.A. Garnyk, arrived in East Germany on 11 or 12 March 1955 and stayed until 17 March. He was accompanied by his wife and three Russian engineers. During his visit, he was escorted by the senior Russian adviser to the East German Ministry of Transport, General Veronichev, and Colonels Tarasov and Tolstikh. He paid only a short visit to the East German Ministry of Transport, where he met Minister Erwin Kramer.
2. On 13 March, Garnyk and the three engineers, accompanied by Veronichev, Tarasov, and Tolstikh, visited the Magdeburg district railroad administration, and subsequently the Erfurt administration. Commenting on the visit afterwards, a senior official of the East German Ministry of Transport said that Garnyk and his three advisers had considered the reports of the 9 Russian engineers who had been working with the Ministry of Transport from December 1954 until the end of February 1955. Their main interest was the capacity of the Magdeburg and Erfurt railroad networks.

Inspection of Railroad Facilities by Russian Engineers

3. Two of the 9 Russian engineers thoroughly examined the safety system used on the East German railroads, including automatic and mechanical devices, telecommunications, and the dispatcher system. They were not satisfied with what they found and commented that the safety system employed in the USSR was greatly superior. In their view, East Germany should take urgent steps to introduce a fully automatic safety system on its railroads. These two engineers left the Ministry in early March with the rest of the Russian delegation, but said that they might return in April.

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Railroad Administration

4. Informed officials of the East German Ministry of Transport believe that the recent press announcement that the electrification of the Magdeburg-Halle line would be complete in 1955 was premature. There is no prospect of this project's being completed this year.
5. Fritz Szczepiecki has been appointed Deputy Minister of the East German Ministry of Transport under Kramer. He is in charge of the Abteilung Betrieb, Verkehr und Maschinentechnische Dienst.
6. Until early February 1955, the offices of the Railroad Division of the East German Ministry of Transport had telephones on an internal exchange [redacted] Subscribers could be connected with an outside line by dialling 0 and then the outside number desired. The majority of telephones have now been changed to a [redacted] exchange [redacted] from which it is impossible to be connected with an outside line.

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